

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A surgical instrument comprising:
  - a receiving component having a longitudinal axis;
  - 5 a modular tip configured to be coupled in a rigid manner to the receiving component in two or less orientations; and
  - a locking mechanism for securing the tip to the receiving component.
2. The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the tip includes a mating component configured to be coupled to the receiving component by insertion of the mating component into the receiving component in a direction substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the receiving component, or by rotating the mating component relative to the receiving component, or a combination thereof.  
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3. The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the tip includes a mating component configured to be coupled to the receiving component such that a force applied to the mating component along the longitudinal axis of the receiving component in a direction away from the receiving component is resisted by the receiving component independently from any resistive force applied by the locking mechanism.  
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- 20 4. The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the tip includes a mating component having at least three planar surfaces configured to engage at least three planar surfaces of the receiving component.

5. The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the tip includes a mating component having a conical surface configured to engage a conical surface of the receiving component.
6. The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the tip includes a mating component having planar surfaces configured to engage planar surfaces of the receiving component to resist a moment or load acting on the tip.
7. The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the locking mechanism is configured to secure the mating component along at least two surfaces.
8. The surgical instrument of Claim 7, further comprising a spring for resiliently biasing the locking mechanism in a locked position.
- 10 9. The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the locking mechanism includes a first member and a second member being moveable within the receiving component, each member having a surface that engages, in a locked position, a corresponding surface of the mating component.
- 15 10. The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the locking mechanism includes a collar slideable along the longitudinal axis of the receiving component between a locked position and an unlocked position.
11. The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the locking mechanism includes a collar rotatable about the receiving component between a locked position and an unlocked position.
- 20 12. The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the tip includes a mating component configured to be coupled to the receiving component and wherein the

receiving component includes a recess and an opening that form a connecting member in the receiving component, the connecting member being configured to cooperatively engage a recess in the mating component.

13. The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the tip includes a mating component configured to be coupled to the receiving component, further comprising a rod configured to cooperatively engage a semi-circular recess in the mating component.  
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14. The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the instrument is configured to be used in the compression or distraction of objects.
- 10 15. The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the receiving component is provided at an end of a handle.
16. A surgical instrument comprising:  
a receiving component having a longitudinal axis;  
a modular tip including a mating component configured to be coupled in  
15 a rigid manner to the receiving component; and  
a locking mechanism for securing the mating component to the receiving component;  
the mating component being coupled to the receiving component such  
that a force applied to the mating component along the longitudinal axis of the  
20 receiving component in a direction away from the receiving component is  
resisted by the receiving component independently from any resistive force  
applied by the locking mechanism.
17. The surgical instrument of Claim 16, wherein the mating component is  
configured to be coupled to the receiving component by insertion of the mating

component into the receiving component in a direction substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the receiving component, or by rotating the mating component relative to the receiving component, or a combination thereof.

- 5    18. The surgical instrument of Claim 16, wherein the mating component includes planar surfaces configured to engage planar surfaces of the receiving component to resist a moment or load acting on the tip.
19. The surgical instrument of Claim 16, wherein the planar surfaces are tapered.
20. The surgical instrument of Claim 16, wherein the locking mechanism is configured to secure the mating component along at least two surfaces.
- 10    21. The surgical instrument of Claim 16, wherein the receiving component includes a recess and an opening that form a connecting member in the receiving component, the connecting member being configured to cooperatively engage a recess in the mating component.
- 15    22. An attachment mechanism for a device, comprising:
  - a modular tip including a mating component;
  - a receiving component configured to be coupled in a rigid manner to the mating component in two or less orientations; and
  - a locking mechanism for securing the mating component to the receiving component.
- 20    23. The attachment mechanism of Claim 22, wherein the locking mechanism includes a collar slideable along, or rotatable about, the receiving component.

24. A method for attaching a modular tip to a surgical instrument that includes a receiving component configured to be coupled to the tip, the instrument also including a locking mechanism for securing the tip to the receiving component, the method comprising:
  - 5                   actuating a locking mechanism;
  - inserting a mating component of the modular tip into the receiving component by moving the mating component in a direction substantially perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the receiving component, or by rotating the mating component relative to the receiving component, or a combination thereof; and
  - 10                  releasing the locking mechanism to secure the tip to the receiving component.
25. The method of Claim 24, further comprising the step of detaching the tip from the receiving component by actuating the locking mechanism and removing the mating component from the receiving component by moving the mating component in a direction substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the receiving component.  
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